

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

### About the course

The MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies places forced migration in an academic framework, preparing you for doctoral study or for work relevant to human rights, refugees, and migration.

The course provides an intellectually demanding, interdisciplinary route to understanding forced migration in contexts of conflict, repression, natural disasters, environmental change and development.

You will gain an understanding of the complex and varied nature of forced migration and refugee populations, of their centrality to global, regional and national processes of political, social and economic change, and of the needs and aspirations of forcibly displaced people themselves. You will also develop a broad understanding of academic research related to forced migration and refugees, engage in critical thinking and acquire sound evaluative tools.

You will gain the ability to plan, organise and carry out research into aspects of forced migration and refugee studies, as well as the skills necessary to convey theoretical knowledge of forced migration to a variety of different audiences.

### Course structure

An overview of the course structure is provided below. Details of the compulsory and optional elements of the course are provided in the *Course components* section of this page.

In the first and second terms you will follow core courses that introduce the subject of forced migration from a range of disciplinary perspectives, including anthropological, political and legal perspectives. There is also a two-term course dedicated to research methods relevant to the study of forced migration.

In the second term you will choose two options courses from a list which changes from year to year.

In the third term, you will write a thesis.

Teaching takes place in small classes, usually from 5 to 25 students, including regular one-to-one supervisions. This emphasis on small group teaching helps encourage active participation, enabling students to learn from each other as well as from department's teaching staff, who are all leading experts in the field of forced migration, drawn from a range of disciplines typically including anthropology, geography, international law, history and politics, international relations, sociology and development studies.

Teaching styles vary, including lectures, workshops, individual and group tutorials, seminars and student presentations. You will be expected to prepare for class by reading a selection of recommended books, book chapters and articles and by preparing formative essays and presentations. There will be around two hours of formal teaching each weekday during term time, with informal group work and self-directed study expected to take up an additional six hours each day.

As a student on the course you will have access to a wide range of public seminars organised by the department, including the [RSC Public Seminar Series](http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events) (<http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events>). Beyond the immediate degree, Oxford offers a great variety of events, including seminars and lectures by distinguished academics and policy-makers in related fields. Other RSC resources include [Forced Migration Review](https://www.fmreview.org/) (<https://www.fmreview.org/>), and the [RSC Working Paper Series](http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications) (<http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications>), to which students who are awarded a distinction for their thesis may be invited to contribute.

### Attendance

The course is full-time and requires attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the [University's Residence requirements](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements). (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements>)

### Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students to support with learning and research, as well as [guidance on what technology to bring with you as a new student \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring) at Oxford.

In addition to the world-class resources of the Bodleian Library, the [Social Sciences Library \(http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl\)](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl) is nearby offering study spaces, discussion rooms, printing and IT facilities and research support. It has considerable print and digital strengths in development studies and a specialist librarian on staff. As alumni of the University, students can sign up for [access to online journals through JSTOR \(https://www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/journals\)](https://www.alumni.ox.ac.uk/journals).

The department provides hot-desking areas with desktops and printing, as well as wireless internet access. Technical support is available through the department, your college and the [University's IT Services \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/), which also offers [training courses \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/it-training\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/it-training). Course materials are available online via Canvas, the University's Virtual Learning Environment.

Teaching usually takes place in the department's seminar rooms, and there is a common room area where students from all the department's courses can gather. Light lunches in the Cafeteria are available during term.

## Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford Department of International Development and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Oxford Department of International Development.

Individual supervisors will support your academic development from the start; they are allocated on the basis of your research interests, the expertise of staff supervising on the course and their availability. You will work with your individual supervisor on your thesis throughout the degree, meeting roughly every two weeks in term time. In addition, you will have a college advisor whom you may consult on issues concerning your personal wellbeing.

## Assessment

On-course assessment, which will not count towards your degree, takes the form of regular presentations and short essays. The degree is formally assessed by research methods coursework, written examinations on the core courses, assessment of options through examination and/or essay submission; and a thesis at the end of the third term.

## Course components

### Compulsory study

In the first and second terms you will follow core courses that introduce the subject of forced migration from a range of disciplinary perspectives, including anthropological, political and legal perspectives. There is also a two-term course dedicated to research methods relevant to the study of forced migration.

In the third term, you will write a thesis. This is typically a desk-based study, since there is little time to undertake individual fieldwork within the nine months of the course.

### Options

In the second term you will choose two options courses from a list which changes from year to year, but which usually includes a course on advanced International Human Rights and Refugee Law, and courses furthering regional specialisation.

Although you may attend other options courses, you will only be examined on the core courses, your two chosen option courses and the thesis.

## Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course page. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after registration. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made if a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency occurs. In addition, in certain circumstances, for example due to visa difficulties or because the health needs of students cannot be met, it may be necessary to make adjustments to course requirements for international study.

Where possible your academic supervisor will not change for the duration of your course. However, it may be necessary to assign a new academic supervisor during the course of study or before registration for reasons which might include illness, sabbatical leave, parental leave or change in employment.

For further information please see our page on [changes to courses](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses>) and the [provisions of the student contract](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract>) regarding changes to courses.

## Costs

### Annual course fees

The fees for this course are charged on an annual basis.

### Fees for the 2026-27 academic year at the University of Oxford

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£32,020
Overseas	£40,710

### What do course fees cover?

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional information section below, course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional costs information below.

### How long do I need to pay course fees?

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year fees will usually increase annually, as explained in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

Our [fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges) pages provide further information, including details about:

- [course fees and fee liability \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability);
- [how your fee status is determined \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status); and
- [changes to fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges).

Information about how much fees and other costs will usually increase each academic year is set out in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

### Additional costs

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs. However, as part of your course requirements, you will choose a dissertation topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel costs within the UK, and other research expenditures. It is also possible that an optional field trip within the UK might be organised. You will need to meet the additional costs associated with the dissertation research and the optional trip (if you choose to take part), although you will be able to apply for small grants from your department to help you cover some of these expenses.

### Living costs

In addition to your course fees and any additional course-specific costs, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

### Living costs for full-time study

For the 2026-27 academic year, the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student is between £1,405 and £2,105 for each month spent in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford. Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to budget for the [costs of a student visa and immigration health surcharge \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) and/or [living costs for family members or other dependants \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field\\_listing\\_content\\_content-item--2\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2), that you plan to bring with you to Oxford (if [dependant visa eligibility criteria \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family) are met).

### Further information about living costs

The current economic climate and periods of high national inflation in recent years make it harder to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. For study in Oxford beyond the 2026-27 academic year, it is suggested

that you budget for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

A breakdown of likely living costs for one month during the 2026-27 academic year are shown below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford.

#### Likely living costs for one month in Oxford during the 2026-27 academic year

	Lower range	Upper range
<b>Food</b>	£315	£545
<b>Accommodation</b>	£825	£990
<b>Personal items</b>	£160	£310
<b>Social activities</b>	£50	£130
<b>Study costs</b>	£35	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£1,405	£2,105

For information about how these figures have been calculated as well as tables showing the likely living costs for nine and twelve months, please refer to the [living costs \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) page of our website.

#### Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this document please [contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email \(graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk\)](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk).